



## Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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### **Dillingham, Seward, Valdez and JBER hospitals designated as trauma centers**

*Traumatic injury a leading cause of death in Alaska*

ANCHORAGE — The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services is pleased to congratulate Kanakanak Hospital in Dillingham, Providence Seward Medical Center, Providence Valdez Medical Center, and the 673<sup>rd</sup> MDG Hospital at Joint Base Elemendorf-Richardson in Anchorage on their achievement of receiving Level IV trauma center designation.

Alaska now has eight Level IV trauma centers including: Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Regional Hospital in Bethel; Sitka Community Hospital; Mt. Edgecumbe Hospital; and Norton Sound Regional Hospital in Nome. Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage is the only Level II trauma center in Alaska, the highest level designation currently appropriate for Alaska.

A trauma care system includes a network of hospitals providing a spectrum of care for injured patients. Trauma center designations are based on the hospital's care capability, from the highest, Level I, to hospitals designated Level IV. Level I and II facilities must provide a constantly available level of personnel, equipment and coverage by a full complement of trauma specialists. Level IV hospitals provide initial evaluation, assessment, stabilization and transfer of critical patients to higher level trauma centers.

A team of Alaska health care professionals, appointed by the state Division of Public Health, verifies trauma centers using American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma criteria.

Trauma is the leading cause of death for people between the ages of 1 and 44 in the United States. Alaska continues to have the second-highest trauma death rate in the nation. Extensive data demonstrate nationally that there is up to a 25-percent increase in survival rates of seriously injured patients when they are treated at a designated trauma center versus a non-designated trauma center.

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